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literary agency
editorial and
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Dear Laura:

In a day or so I am going to be submitting an outline to Viking Press for a book about you! David Bell, whom you have now met, I believe, is an old friend and is now an editor at Viking. For a long time David and I have been sharing enthusiasms for the Southwest, and David is now ready to really do something about publishing things relevant to that area. He has your Rio Grande book on his desk and is considering doing something about that! But meanwhile, I've been riding him hard to sign up a book on you, and he's now agreed to do it, with the next step being the outline.

The book, together with the film project, has turned into quite a complicated adventure. I've wanted to tie them together, figuring the symbiosis would be helpful to both, and I managed to get several publishers interested in tying into the film project, but then couldn't get the funding together on that... Oh well, I think the book will now help the film!

So, here's what I plan. It will be a monograph (but unlike the M & M -- who have gone bankrupt, in case you haven't heard) -- I expect to have something to say and not merely give a re-hash of the pictures) with detailed biography, critical evaluation (along the lines Susan Sontag has been pioneering in photographic criticism, as against the historical-technical approach of B. Newhall), a solid retrospective viewing of your work, bibliography, chronology, etc. etc.

I expect the acceptance of the outline sometime next month, and then want to get right to work. I hope by then we may also have something to go on for further film work. Gretel has been working away at making applications for grants, etc. Several are awaiting answers, and one may click. But in any case I expect to have a contract in hand and be able to work on it this spring. I will, of course, want to spend a lot of time with you, "interviewing", taking, tape recording, etc. I hope you won't find it all too much of an imposition.

Also, I want to share royalties with you. I don't want to be in the role of biographer who exploits his subject. I think I can do the work and be adequately compensated by taking a 60% cut on the royalties, you take 40. However, before the split I would want to take out the out-of-pocket travel expenses, and long-distance telephone calls, neither of which should be too gigantic. And you should also take expenses out, such as the costs of making any needed reproduction prints.

Aside from the frustrations of getting funding for the film, things have been going along OK. I did make a big print sale recently, 120 prints documenting people in the Big Sur area, which I sold for \$10,000. Biggest print sale in my life! And my new work is finally taking final form.

I hope all goes well with you. Gretel tells me she's kept in touch with you but with all her travelling around lately, I haven't kept in touch with her any too well.

Cheers!

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